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THE HERO SERIES

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# KING CROMWELL

BY

WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

Author of "A HERO AND SOME  
OTHER FOLK," Etc.



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## King Cromwell

FELLOWSHIP with great ideas amplifies the soul. The study of a sunset or a mountain or the sea exalts him who studies. Great ideas are the heritage of the human mind. But a man is always greater than any material thing. The spiritual always dwarfs the physical. The mountain, lifting forehead to the heavens, is less a giant than the man who stands at its far base and computes its altitude. The locomotive, with its ponderous complexity, is simplicity and commonplaceness as compared with Stephenson, who created the iron monster and governs its goings. The ocean, that home of slumbering storms and wrathful tempests, that symbol of infinity and omnipotence,—the ocean is not so great as the dreamy man who stands upon its shore and meditates its mastery. Columbus is greater than the great Atlantic.

A man is an aggregation of ideas. He embodies some movement; is the amplification of some concept. He is, therefore, of supreme importance to the world. He is, by

virtue of his greatness, passed into the circulating medium of the intellectual realm, and is not to be underrated. To study him is not servility nor hero worship, but is wisdom and honest dealing with one's own life. Show me greatness, and you have made me your debtor. To be associated with the colossal elevates the spirit. This is a common fact of intellectual history. Every man who has lifted himself from the low levels, where he found his life groveling, knows that except he had touched the hem of greatness' garment, he had never arisen even to his little height.

Cromwell was a great soul. Near him I feel as if I stood within the shadow of a pyramid. The day is gone when men wrangled over his greatness. If any man call the roll of imperial genius, be sure the name of Oliver Cromwell will be there. His burly figure stalks across every stage where genius doth appear. There are some men who are locally great. Their genius is provincial. They belong to vicinities. Close at hand they seem men of mighty stature; far removed they appear as pygmies on the plain. To this class most men of note belong. They have their day. They serve their generation. Their serv-

ice to the world is not to be underrated. Without them history would indeed suffer loss. And yet their speech is not a world speech, nor are they world figures.

There are other men who have no marks of provincialism, either in speech or look. They have hung their blazing orbs so high as to have become the luminaries of the world. Their glory is so illustrious that all men count them stars of the first magnitude. They have "become a name." The earth esteems their fame a precious heritage. To this decimated list the name of Cromwell belongs. However much men differ in their estimates of his character, there is practically no differing on the question of his genius. There is a unanimity of sentiment here, which must strike every reader of biography and history with delighted surprise.

Gladstone ranks Cromwell with Charlemagne and Napoleon. Clarendon recognizes him as no common man. Nicholson says: "He was a man for all ages to admire, for all Britons to honor in proud remembrance;" and adds: "No royal name, at least since Alfred's, is more worthy of our veneration than that of the usurper, Oliver Cromwell." Thurloe,

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Cromwell's Secretary of State, himself no mean figure, declares, "A greater soul never dwelt among men." Goldwin Smith says, "A greater proof of practical capacity was never given." Macaulay calls him "the most profound politician of his age," and says: "Such was his genius and resolution that he was able to overpower and crush everything that crossed his path, and to make himself more absolute master of his country than any of her legitimate kings had been." Cardinal Mazarin gave his grudging but incontestable testimony to the Protector's greatness, in that he "feared Cromwell more than he feared the devil, and changed color at the mention of his name." The above remark will have the more significance if it be remembered that the cardinal had a lively belief in a personal devil; and his life was such that it can not be doubted he had a wholesome fear of him. Guizot, who can not be classed among Cromwell's panegyrists, pays this tribute to him: "He is, perhaps, the only example which history affords of one man having governed the most opposite events, and proved sufficient for the most various destinies." This list of testimonials to the greatness of the man Cromwell may well close with

the phrase of Carlyle. To him, among his heroes, he is "Great Cromwell." And, indeed, there is no assignable reason why this man should not be placed in the list with a Great Frederick and a Great Charles. By right of his genius, he may well be named Cromwell the Great.

If I am told that the man about to come upon the stage is one who founded empires, wore a crown of more than royal splendor, won plaudits from unwilling lips—and if such a man come, can it be otherwise than that I shall view him with attentive vision, even with my soul in my eyes! Behold, Cromwell is here!

He is five feet ten inches high. He is broad, burly, and half-clad in mail. A huge head, "fit to be the workshop of vast matters," is planted on his shoulders. He is fiery, fierce, brave as Achilles, yet tender as a woman. His is an English face. No perfumed Adonis he; no fine-cut Greek features—a Briton all and all. No man can well mistake this man's nationality. He looks of the race which produced him; eyes that look into things and beyond them; silent, melancholic, fitted for a soldier in a world's battle. He seemed a tower

which it were folly to attempt to storm; a bolt shot from a thunder-cloud, impossible to resist; a sphinx riddle, no man could solve; a secret that must die untold; a man you would turn to look upon when you pass, not knowing why you looked. The Puritan soldier and prince has come. Look!

Cromwell was born in 1599. As Carlyle has finely said, he was "always a year older than his century." Four years later, Elizabeth died, and the Tudors were but a name in history. He was born during a lull in national affairs, which was the calm before the fury-burst of the tempest. His life began on the verge of such a precipice that "the murmuring surge that on the unnumbered idle pebbles chafes, could not be heard so high"—a sheer leap down into a seething sea of war, of anarchy, of blood. His life was an arch which spans the chasm between two dynasties. History has shown that he lived in a crisis, and was a man born for crucial moments in the chemistry of nations. Some men are fitted for epoch making—sinewy to withstand the fury of tremendous onset. Athanasius, Savonarola, Luther, Cromwell, Pym, Lincoln—these

men seem molded in colossal matrices for unusual service and superior destinies.

Cromwell was well born; not greatly born. Here is a wise distinction nature makes, and men might well mark. He was not plebeian, was not prince. The blood of Scotch royalty flowed through his veins, and the strength of English yeomanry was latent in his arm. Through and through, he was a representative of the land of his nativity. He was of the middle rank, which has made England what England is. He was a farmer, a cattle-breeder, a soldier cast in nobler than Roman mold. He was a man of college training, by forecast a lawyer: by providence and fealty to duty, a farmer, a general, a statesman, a king.

Every man's genius is colored by his age. His environment does not control, but does put its stamp upon his destiny. The image and superscription of genius is imprinted by the age which produces the man. Few men are to be understood apart from their times. We must study the topography of genius, if we would comprehend the achievements of generals and the utterances of kings. If you will rehearse to me the story of Prometheus, tell me not

only his name and fame, but that a black, scarred crag of the Caucasus held him, that the vultures gnawed at his vitals, that lightnings hurled their gleaming spears about his head, and thunders made his lonely citadel of pain to rock like fisher's bark on tempest-drenched seas. These things, the dire accessories of woe, are necessities for the comprehension of the Titan tale. So of Moses, I must know not only who, but where: Egypt, born of a slave, adopted by a queen, learned in all the knowledge of that wisest land, a king's heir, self-exiled from the throne, lone Midian with its wandering flock, the sea passed through dry-shod, the desert, Sinai, the law, Pisgah, Nebo—all these things must be told ere I can comprehend the life of the chiefest legislator of the world.

So must I understand the times in which this man Cromwell wrought if I would comprehend his achievements. Born in Elizabeth's reign! What a heyday of glory! What glamour clings about those days! Chivalry, romance, Raleigh, Leicester, din of arms, shout of victory, crash of Armadas, and through all haughty-faced, golden-haired Elizabeth, standing an omnipresent personality!

How these incongruities become congruous when seen in those historic times! But we must look into these things more narrowly. Students of history must look through appearances into realities. Elizabeth's age was an age of incomplete reformation, of decaying chivalry, of commerce and colonization, of surprising energy and action, which produced the drama. These points summarize the distinctive features of the Elizabethan era. Look at them briefly.

The Reformation had no stronger or more virulent opposer than Henry VIII. He loved a woman not his wife, and wished to divorce his queen. Rome would not grant the king's desire, whereupon Henry denied Papal supremacy. He married Annie Boleyn, and introduced the Reformation; but such a distorted semblance as to be scarcely recognizable. The Reformation came to England to gratify the lust of a lecherous king. The new Church differed from the old in one regard. In the old, the Pope was supreme; in the new, the king was supreme. King and Pope were combined in a single person. Here was the union of Church and State. It must be apparent that a change made for such reasons

and continued under such forms, must be a thing from which pure men would revolt. Elizabeth sustained the same relation to the Church as had her father. With her the Church was a subordinate department of State. She was Protestant by circumstances. Her conscience was no active member of the Royal Council. She was head of the Protestant powers of Europe more as a matter of policy than religion. Indeed, to speak with even reasonable accuracy, she was such solely for politic reasons. It was, let us say sadly but with all certainty, an era of incomplete Reformation.

It was also an age of decaying chivalry. The day of chivalry was growing late. The purity of knighthood was largely a departed glory. Instead of the nobility of sincerity, which made beautiful the face and fame of King Arthur, there was the laugh of insincerity and the hollowness of hypocrisy. Chivalry was a dying splendor. The Sidneys and Raleighs were a hopeless minority. The impurity that blights was rife. The court of Elizabeth was not the home of a Christian queen. The captivating beauty of Spenser's "Fairie Queen" finds no counterpart in the

chivalry of Elizabeth's reign. "False Duessa" of Spenser's tale might well stand as the sad symbol of Elizabethan chivalry. Elizabeth fostered hypocrisy. She watered with her woman's hand that upas tree. She smiled on knighthood kneeling at her throne, with lies as black as treason on the knight's lips. Chivalry, with its storied purity, was not. The Crusader, whose heart was full of nobility, and whose hand was full of deeds of high emprise, was dead. He slumbered in his grave; and with him slept the sacred dust of Christian chivalry.

This was an age of discovery and colonization. The English were beginning to guess the secret of their insular position. The sea was beckoning them to sail beyond the sunset. The fire that burned within the life of the Renaissance burned here. Men urged their way along the yeasting seas; they longed to sight new worlds. A Columbus heart throbbed in many a discoverer's breast. They sought new lands; and new lands found must be peopled. Commerce must build her metropolis of trade. Sailors, soldiers, settlers, must go together. These were contemporaries in the new land. Boldness characterized the adventurer in

Elizabeth's reign. She herself was as brave as Boadicea. Cowardice is not one of Elizabeth's sins, nor is it a sin of her age. There were bold men in those days, and they sailed to the world's limit, and essayed to seize new hemispheres for England's supremacy.

It was the age of the drama. Those were days of action. Tremendous and almost resistless energy was here. The blood ran like lightning along men's veins. Magnificent energies were driving along like a whirlwind. It was an actor's age. The drama grew out of the nature of things. That species of poetry grew in Greece when Athens was as sleepless as the ocean. It is the exponent of superlative energy. In such an atmosphere the drama grows to its full height. In Elizabeth's reign the drama "rose like an exhalation." In a brief period it grew to such noble proportions that it might well lay claim to have wrested the scepter from the hand of Attica. Elizabeth's age shows the drama at its best; since then it has declined, a setting star.

In an age marked with such peculiarities, Cromwell was born. Elizabeth's was essentially a feudal reign. The Tudors were a feudal house. Elizabeth was a feudal sovereign. She, hating

death, died. Death tore the scepter from her hand, the purple from her shoulders, the crown from her head; he took her from her throne, and hewed her out a tomb. The Tudors were dead; the Stuarts were come. Strength was no more. Weakness clung with timid fingers to the royal prerogatives. In 1603, Elizabeth lay dying; in 1649, Charles Stuart's head dropped on the scaffold at Whitehall—in 1603, a whole people delirious with loyalty; in 1649, all England sullen with wrath that slew their king. Truly, "the old order changes, giving place to new." But the change in appearance was only indicative of the change the people had undergone. It was a tide telling how high the sea had risen. We may well challenge history to show so radical a change in so brief a period. It was the sailing into a new, untried sea. It was the passing into a new hemisphere lit with new stars; into a realm unknown, vast, curtained with mystery. It was a change so entire, so unparalleled, that no precedent could be adduced. It was sailing when chart and compass and stars are gone.

This was not the England of Elizabeth, but a new and untried thing. Hers was the England of the cavalier and the Churchman. This

was the England of the commoner and the Puritan. It resembled the old order only in its possession of tremendous and resistless energy. The river still plunged like a mountain torrent toward the sea; but the channels were changed. Puritanism was here. It came like an apparition. It stalked upon the stage of human affairs, and men knew not whence it came, nor whither it hastened. It was a strange thing; it was a great thing. What, then, is Puritanism? This question needs candid answer. More, it demands it. Puritanism is not an incomprehensible thing, but is in the main an uncomprehended thing. Men laugh at it, make their common jests at its expense. I had as lief laugh at Niagara or the Matterhorn. Stupendousness is not a fit subject for jest, nor sublimity a theme fitting the humorist's powers; yet the greater part of men's knowledge of Puritanism is that which appertains to its vagaries. It had idiosyncrasies; all greatness has. It was not perfect, but was such a thing as towered immeasurably above all religious contemporaries. In our day, looking back across that seventeenth century plain crowded with armies, misted with battle-smoke, tumultuous with battle's din—

looking back we behold Puritanism a peak lifting itself so high into the azure that, when all else is hid, it stands sublime, a beacon to the world. Puritanism was no tangle of incongruities, no maze of absurdities. It was wise above its day. It was a revolt against falsehood, hollowness, hypocrisy. It was an exodus of men from an Egypt of falsehood and insincerity into a Canaan of truth. It was the coming to the side of truth; the taking stand within the ranks of God.

As has been shown, the Anglican Church was half Romanism and more. It lacked those elements which should characterize an ecclesiasticism. From such a thing the Puritans departed; and never had a religious exodus more justification. Puritanism was an incarnation of Christian conscience. That is saying much, but is speaking noble truth. True, it was not the genial and beautiful thing Christ's manhood was. They patterned rather after Moses and Elijah than after Christ. But better Moses than Pharaoh, better Elijah than Ahab. Those who can scarcely marshal words meet for the task of condemning the Puritan severity of morals and life, find no difficulty in passing the orgies of a brothel court of the second

Charles with a feeble and smiling condemnation that amounts to a magnification of sin. It were well to preserve at least a semblance of fairness in discussing important matters. So Puritanism came. It asked no man's leave. It stood a stern, strong, heroic thing. It championed the cause of purity and devotion to God. It believed in the brotherhood and common equality of man. It believed in one God and one Book. No better and no nobler tribute can be paid that band of Christian men and women whom history names Puritans than to say, as has been said, "They were men of one Book." The Bible was their *vade mecum*. These men possessed a devotion to duty, as they apprehended it, which was as beautiful as a mother's self-sacrifice; stern and pitiless as the winter's storm toward Romanism and sin in any guise, but tender towards wife, mother, babe, as any heart that ever beat. They were knights in a new and illustrious chivalry. They made battle for purity of thought, lips, and life. My heart, as it beholds the Puritan, cries, "Hail, all hail!"

This change was great past all belief. Pray, you, what caused it? But one answer is possible,—the Bible. The Bible is a revolution-

izer. That was *the Book*. Puritanism pored over it as schoolboys con their lessons with bent heads. They were saturated with the Bible thought and Bible phrase. Their thought framed itself to speech in the Bible sentences. On Dunbar's field, when mists began to lift and the battle came, Puritan Cromwell cried, "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered." His was the Puritan speech. His life was molded by God's Book. With it all Puritans held constant companionship. The Bible is a renovator. Let the Bible enter any man's thought, and it will ennoble. Stand a man face to face with the Bible concepts, and he will begin to pant for room. It flings vastness into his soul. The Bible begets a new life. Puritanism was new. Men thought these men monstrosities; but they were noble normalities. There were in them greatness, wisdom, goodness. Looking at them, we say, scarcely thinking what we utter, "There were giants in those days."

Cromwell was a Puritan. He was permeated with the decrees. His was a bilious temperament. He was moody, silent, brooding, melancholy. All great souls have melancholy hours, and know the ministry of silence.

Moses prepared for God's work in the solitudes of Horeb; and every Moses must be girt for his great battles by the ministration of sublime silences. Cromwell, in his fen lands, in his silence, mused on God's Word, was converted, came into the secret of the Divine, merged his life into the life of God, and came to be a moody soul lit with resplendent Bible lights. Who does not comprehend this will not comprehend Cromwell. The hieroglyphics of this man's life are not decipherable if a man holds not this key. He embodied Puritanism. To know Milton and Cromwell is to know Puritanism. They are the high tides of that illustrious era. Cromwell had seen false chivalry die; had seen the true chivalry spring into majestic life; had seen the Puritan day grow crimson with the dawn. He dwelt under Stuart tyranny. That family was weak. The Tudors, whatever their faults—and they were many—were strong. Henry VII had a giant's arm. He was of kingly stature and imperial mold. Henry VIII, libertine as he was, had kingly powers and talent for administration akin to genius. Even Mary, with her hands dyed in martyr's blood, was not weak. She had virility not wholly mastered by her

woman's heart. Her successor might well be named King Elizabeth. She was king, not queen. And when the government passed from a royal line, whose powers and prowess were manifest, into the hands of driveling incompetency and pedantic weakness, the antithesis was so startling as to waken men from their quiescent moods, till on the lips of even steadfast loyalty there came the unpremeditated query, "Why should this weakness reign over us?"

Men will forgive much if there be strength. The French tolerated a Louis XIV, and not a Louis XVI, because the one was strong, and the other weak. They tolerated the administration and gloried in the rule of a Napoleon, and dethroned a Charles X, because Napoleon, though a tyrant, was strong; and Charles was a tyrant and weak. The Stuarts were weak. There was no strength among them. Charles II, in spite of his monstrous vices, had more of the symptoms of strength than James I, Charles I, or James II. James I was a pedant, an overgrown schoolboy, "the wisest fool in Christendom." Charles I was the creature of favorites, was possessed of no gift of comprehending the people whom he ruled, was

an egotist, and as false as even a king could well be. James II was an intolerant bigot, blind as a mole, and so incapable of learning that even a scaffold dyed with his father's blood could teach him no wisdom. Such were the Stuarts. The Tudors had been tyrannical, but were not pusillanimous in their weakness. There was no more despotism in James I than Elizabeth, nor in Charles I than in Henry VIII; but there was strength in the Tudors, and only weakness in the Stuarts. They were a puerile race. Charles had all the Tudor's pride and self-assurance, with none of the Tudor's astuteness or strength; and the result is what any attentive reader of history might forecast. Men rebelled. The Puritan revolution grew as naturally as ever did the wind-flower or the violet.

Liberty is a perennial reappearance. When man thinks it dead, it but "mews its mighty youth." It marches forward and upward. The contest between cavalier and Puritan was liberty's conflict. The battle belonged, not to England, but to the world. It was the cause of our common humanity. And Cromwell, as the leader in the fray, becomes a figure in liberty's lists, and a character of consequence

in the history of men. To every lover of liberty the name of Oliver Cromwell must have in it a deep and solemn music, like the singing of a psalm. Liberty's battle is on. The King is uppermost. He is victorious. Capacity comes to the front. Cromwell moves into view. He was no seeker of place; place sought him. He tarried at home, and did the work that came to hand. He hated oppression. He loved liberty. What his kinsman Hampden did in the matter of ship-money, that Cromwell did in the matter of the draining of the fens. He felt himself in a high sense a subject of the government of God. He held himself ready to move obedient to the Divine command. Where duty called, he followed. Liberty called Cromwell: he did not call himself. The exigencies of the hour pronounced his name. Capacity makes room for itself. It is always so. Gustavus Adolphus came because the place needed him. In the swirl of battle great men appear, because the time calls them. When liberty puts clarion trumpet to her lips, and sounds her note of wild alarm, then a host answers, "Lo, we come." War came in a great nation. This was no race of warriors, and had no long list of military great-

ness from which to call leaders. The time came when the nation's life hung by a thread; when freedom's empire was well-nigh lost; and in the time of dire extremity help came. Grant, the invincible, with unostentatious bearing, comes and leads a million men to victory. It was the triumph of capacity. Greatness needs no herald before its face, nor asks for place, gift of another's hand; but does its duty, bides its time. So Cromwell came; illustrious day! He saw what others did not see. This battle was not primarily between social classes, but between conscience, religion, manhood on the one hand, and no conscience and hollow insincerity on the other.

"We must have God-fearing men," said Cromwell. This was a speech genius alone could pronounce. That was insight into the very spirit of the times. He knew the thing with which he had to cope. What his coadjutors took years to learn, his acumen discovered at the first. Others led, he followed. Others in the van, he in the rear. He was not troubled about notice or praise. "God noticed him," says Carlyle. He was so faithful to his God and the cause of liberty as an inferior, as to be felt the superior of all.

Some men seem great by lack of standard of measurement. Among a race of Lilliputians, a Gulliver becomes a giant. In inferior epochs, a man may tower above his contemporaries; not because he is so great, but because they are so insignificant. It is possibly so in this instance. But the question need not delay for answer. Look at his contemporaries. Call the names of those men who made those times memorable: Elliot, Pym, Hampden, Milton, Ireton, Thurloe, Blake,—this is a roll of greatness. These men would have shone in the constellations of any age. Add the name of Strafford, that imperious aristocrat, the statesman of the first Stuart reign, and we shall find that Cromwell lived among men whom the world reckons great. How then came this Cromwell to stand among them so vast? If the man was not fit figure for the world's Pantheon, there is no explanation for the fact. He was a leader. He rose from the level where he served his country, to where he was the cynosure of every eye and the desire of England. He hid himself. He put others forward. He asked no rank, but seemed lost in the cause of freedom.

It is observable that in some eras great men

multiply. The times demand greatness. No progress is possible, except nature do bestir herself. See what hosts of notable generals the French Revolution produced. The names of men of superior powers in the American Revolutionary period are legion. It was the same in the crisis of the Rebellion. It is in such times, as if to meet the rush of the tempest and to withstand the mad charge of the sea, one gathered the latent, unsuspected energies of his manhood, and dedicated them every one to the task of standing impregnable as a tower. In this struggle for liberty, when great issues hung in the balance, greatness multiplied. Statesmen unknown arose, and did legislate for generations that were yet to be. The call, the answer, were blended in one voice. Great men were clustering about the standards of liberty; and the most commanding figure on this stormy field is Oliver Cromwell. He is not to be accounted great because he dwelt among a pigmy brood; but rather that, among a coterie of men whose talent was far removed from mediocrity, he, Saul-like, towered a head above them all. Essex must go to the rear; not that Cromwell willed or planned it, but that a greater than he had

come. Cromwell desired Fairfax to have command of the war against the Scots; England had other desires. She knew the general for the conduct of this war was not Fairfax, but Cromwell. The nation had come to know its leader, and Dunbar and Worcester justified England's choice. This quiet, unassuming man now stands revealed,

“The pillar of a people’s hope,  
The center of a world’s desire.”

He “came, saw, conquered.” He massed his God-fearing, praying battalions, and flung them on his enemies like an avalanche. God-fearing men led by a man of God were invincible. The world looked and wondered. Battle with these men was duty; for they fought God’s battles. Cromwell suspected he was there to win.

He declared he would slay the king, should they meet in hour of conflict. He knew his era as no other knew it. He conquered the king, the Irish, the Scotch, the Parliament. He merits the name of Cromwell the Conqueror. The train of his victories is like a silver highway on the swelling sea when the great moon is full.

It is not possible in a brief sketch to give an adequate estimate of genius such as this man possessed. For such task volumes only can suffice. But the characteristics of the man may be summed up best under a dual heading: First, the accusations brought against him; second, the claims made for him. Under the former of these captions three indictments may be mentioned: He was a hypocrite; he was cruel; he betrayed the cause of liberty.

These are grievous charges. They do not militate against his genius; but they, if provable, will blast his character like an eternal mildew. Note each accusation. But before that task be attempted, let it be remarked that his contemporary biographers were those whom he had conquered in battle or mastered in diplomacy. They wrote with pen dipped in gall. Suppose the solitary biographer of the Christ had been Annas or Caiaphas, Sadducee or Pharisee, what distorted features of the Lord would we behold! It is but too apparent that, as seen through their eyes, he would have looked the embodiment of iconoclasm, self-opinionation, and colossal arrogance. We have other, truer, and therefore fairer pictures. They who loved him spoke of

him as he was. They who hated him had caricatured him, and written beneath the travesty, "This fellow." Cromwell's life was not written by men who knew and loved him, but by defeated cavaliers, by jealous inferiority, wrathful because of the man's supremacy, or by lovers of liberty who were dreamers, and had not the insight to discern what Cromwell perceived. With such biographers, who can wonder that the Cromwell of history seems a monster, a second Nero, whose memory is fit only for obloquy? This word of warning is absolutely necessary for those who would know the Puritan general and statesman aright.

To the charge of hypocrisy let it be replied, while his enemies are a unit in this accusation, they are not at all agreed as to the particular instances in which his omnipresent hypocrisy was displayed. One says he was profoundly hypocritical in advocating Fairfax's leadership in the war against the Scots; while Mrs. Harrison is sure that, though he was a monster of duplicity, he was honest here. Cromwell was not a hypocrite. If he was a hypocrite, then was a towering genius exercised here as elsewhere. Hypocrisy is acting a part,

wearing a mask. Cromwell, if he wore a mask, never dropped it. Not in word spoken or written, not in public, nor in privacy to his best beloved, did he seem other than we know him. We are told his religious phrases were a hypocrite's cant; but if any man can candidly read his letters and speeches and so believe, I marvel at his insight. What I maintain is that, if the man was a hypocrite, he was the most masterful deceiver history portrays; he was genius in his craft. In truth, the man was the soul of honest intention. He was a believer in God and the Puritan cause, and in his own mission. He thought himself called of God to act his heroic part. He was a believer in Divine decrees. He prayed, agonized, came from his hours of introspection, imbued with the idea of God's commission for a given task. Such a view of Cromwell makes his life rational. We can thus comprehend it. There is logical consecutiveness in his character. But on any other theory there is no clue whereby to escape the labyrinth. The charge of hypocrisy is an easy method of explaining an abstruse human problem. It is a method much in vogue for explaining what otherwise is inexplicable. In my judgment there is no

shred of proof of Cromwell's alleged hypocrisy.

"Cromwell was cruel." I incline to the opinion that this will not bear the light of honest investigation. He was stern; he was a Puritan. That character was modeled after the Old Testament, rather than the New. The severity of Moses with the Amalekites was before Cromwell's eyes. Those heathen, to his thought, were not more assuredly the enemies of God than the men against whom the Puritan unsheathed his sword. The instance always adduced as proof positive of this charge is the massacre of Drogheda and Wexford. But certain facts must be noted. War is not among the amenities. It is always cruel. But in this epoch, war was clothed with horrors our century can not comprehend. Tilly, in the Thirty Years' War, had been guilty of the most execrable atrocities. The Catholics in Ireland, during the early stages of the Parliamentary struggle, had massacred helpless victims with such savage cruelty that England looked upon the perpetrators as fiends incarnate. They were savage belligerents, whose proclivities for slaughter were so well known that it seemed essential to fling an abiding

terror into their hearts. This was the end in view when Drogheda and Wexford were stormed, and their population slaughtered. The end was gained. The hostile Irish were so totally subdued by the severity that they were guilty of no further outrage. Cromwell's plan, when the whole scope of affairs is considered, was without question the kindest which could have been devised. This man by nature was not cruel. His government was not one of fierce acerbity. His was a gentleness, a tenderness of treatment to the conquered cavalier, which presents a striking contrast to the treatment accorded even the dead by re-enthroned royalty. Cromwell's governmental policy, viewed as a whole, is in no sense open to the charge of cruelty.

But "Cromwell betrayed the cause of liberty." This, if true, expunges the man's name from the roll of patriotism. A traitor! thing to be despised! What are the facts? On what grounds do the charges rest? He became Protector. The war was waged for liberty. Puritanism meant equality. A commonwealth shone in glory before their eyes. The ideal government was now to be inaugurated. Vane, Harrison, Haselrig, dreamed their day-

dream of democracy. They shut eyes and ears. They were oblivious to the tumultuous seas surging about them. Cromwell knew his country and his time. He held his finger on the nation's pulse. He both heard and saw. He comprehended that the Long Parliament, which had in its life accomplished an epoch-making work, had now lived too long. It was becoming senile. The Commonwealth was speeding to destruction. Anarchy lay but a stone's cast ahead. Clear-visioned Cromwell comprehended this. Then he, no stronger believer in human equality lived. He would have England rule itself without the interposition of army or general; but it was not capable for so herculean a labor. He chose to rule, rather than see the thing for which his army and himself had fought fall into ruin.

England was not ready for self-government. It was not yet grown to man's estate. More than a century must pass before Puritanism would grow so great. Confessedly a nation must have assumed the *toga virilis* before it can be self-controlling. France was incapable of self-government in 1789. The list of victims for the guillotine had not been half so long under a monarchy. It is a grave

question whether to this hour the French people are qualified for this duty. The South American republics afford a melancholy spectacle and a suggestive lesson; while Mexico is a republic only in name. Cromwell waited with all patience till he saw whither England was drifting. He knew the brave craft would break to splinters on the rocks. The result subsequent to his death justified his views, and vindicated his motive. It was not a question of Commonwealth or Cromwell; it was a question of Cromwell or Charles II. Cromwell, the great, the heroic, the true; or Charles, the insignificant, the cowardly, the false—which shall rule? Dare any man halt between these extremes? This was the status of national affairs which called forth the resolution and insight of the Puritan statesman. His Protectorate, so far from being a betrayal of liberty, was liberty's preservation.

Having considered the negative phases of this man's character, look at the positive. Cromwell must be studied as soldier, orator, statesman, and man.

And it is as a soldier the world knows him best. That martial figure rivets the world's gaze. He was the soldier pre-eminent of the

Revolutionary period. He rose to be general of all the army by force of achievement and by right of qualification. He was himself. He alone could cope with fiery Rupert. He alone could organize a body of soldiery, whose fame should be as lasting as the world. There was in him the genius of originality and organization. He worked silently and persistently; and from that labor comes the Ironsides, a body of citizen-soldiers, Christians, buckling on the arms of temporal warfare—an organization where rank of mind was superior to rank of blood, a place where men might rise by courage and capacity, an embryonic military republic. This was the new model—praying soldier! Unique creation! Antony, Cæsar, Frederick the Great, were not more original in the cast of their military genius than he. The formation of his army showed his discernment. An army once created, his plan of battle was to drive like a tornado at the enemy's center. He was no Fabius. The peculiarity of the Puritan character was visible in his military tactics. Massive directness, that was all—that was enough. Napoleon was to the end an artillery officer. That stamped all his military operations. Cromwell was to the end a cav-

alry officer. He fought to win; he fought and won. His was no half-hearted battle; but he bared the blade to smite with all the strength that slumbered in his arm. What Tennyson sings of Wellington, might well be sung of Cromwell. He knew no defeat. His name is a synonym of victory. As a general, he is a pride to England, a glory to the world.

Cromwell as orator! This seems a touch of irony, or at best of acid humor. But he was orator. He had no art of Burke or Fox. He was no Chatham, no Pitt. He had no grace of person, nor fascination of speech. But men heard him. He spoke only when his heart was full. He resorted to speech solely when his silence oppressed him like a nightmare. It was the thought he wished expressed that drove him to speech. His periods were not those of Edward Everett. There was turgidity of style which hints of striving to put much thought within the limits of contracted utterance. He was warrior even in his orations. His vocabulary is Anglo-Saxon. It is often forceful as a battle charge. He did not know circumlocution. In speech, as in battle, he drove at the center. The shortest method to express the thought was the line of advance.

Some of his battle bulletins seem to me as expressive as words could make them. I think no man could hear Cromwell speak and be uncertain as to his meaning. His metaphors are mixed, his sentences ill-balanced; but ambiguity was not among his literary faults. There is, in his addresses as handed down to us, something so stalwart, rugged, soldier-like, that I, for one, can not escape their charm. I am well aware to speak of Cromwell as orator is new, but venture to hope there is more than audacity in the claim.

Cromwell was a statesman. This is high honor to claim for any man. Statesmanship is the ability to discover the trend of events, and to shape the course of national affairs in harmony therewith. Politicians are many, statesmen few. They do not often arise. Mark the procession of legislators and premiers of any nation. Note them with care. See them with vision unobscured by the mists of contemporaneous praise and blame; and the conclusion will be forced upon us, however unsavory it may prove, that the statesmen in any nation's life are lamentably few. Soldier, Cromwell was. The justice of this appellation no one denies; but the qualities of generalship and

statesmanship are not often co-existent. A man may be able to mass battalions and execute maneuvers, and be wholly incapable of mastering even the rudiments of statecraft. Illustrations of the truth of this statement multiply in our thought. That Wellington, as a general, was great, let Waterloo declare; but that as a statesman he was below mediocrity, his premiership attests. To the rule as enunciated there are noticeable exceptions; but all such imply a plethora of genius. If Cromwell was statesman as well as general, manifestly he belongs to that illustrious minority who are to be ranked as men of superlative powers.

It is common to say he was no statesman. Eminent authorities are sponsors for this statement. But if statesmanship implies farsighted discernment and ability to achieve success, surely he was a statesman. Cromwell believed in, and unflinchingly advocated, religious toleration. In this the man was a century and more in advance of his times. He brought about the union of England, Ireland, and Scotland. He befriended the American Colonies—a thing no other English king had done. He disfranchised rotten boroughs—a task requir-

ing for its accomplishment the advocacy and diplomacy of leading statesmen of our century. He created the English navy. He attempted to reform the criminal law. He so championed the cause of Protestantism that he brought the Duke of Savoy to a humiliating cessation from persecution. His call assembled the much ridiculed "Barebones Parliament," concerning which it is only just to make two remarks: It was in a high sense a representative body; and did in its enactments forecast many of the most important acts of subsequent English legislation. Cromwell attempted a reform of the Court of Chancery, and succeeded beyond belief. He it was who patronized learned institutions, and first insisted that young men should be trained for the public service in the universities.

These particularizations will suffice to justify the assertion, "Cromwell was a statesman." Many a man has been ranked with statesmen who accomplished not a tithe as much as he. His acts bear the insignia of statesmanship. True it is that many of Cromwell's ventures were not successful. His navies came back defeated; his hopes were unfulfilled. But in his vast schemes it was as in a battle with long

battle front. In some places the forces are driven back, in others they charge victoriously onward; and the army as a whole advances with victory burning on its banners. Cromwell's plans, in part frustrated, in part successful, did in their entirety end in success. When his position is considered, and the odds against which he waged a sleepless war are numbered, it is not extravagant to affirm that no English-born king has shown himself so astute a statesman as the Puritan general, Oliver Cromwell.

But far above the what a man achieves is the what he is. Manhood is nobler than genius. No achievement, however brilliant, can compensate for the lack of manliness. The what I am is the superior of what I do. Puritanism emphasized the dignity of man. Such character as that movement produced, England had not seen for centuries. It has too frequently been the case that great intellectual power has been characterized by correspondingly great turpitude. Genius gives license for lust. With Cromwell it was not so. He was pure. His life was clean. Henry VIII was a libertine; Charles I, a liar; Charles II, a second Domitian for lascivious revels.

Cromwell, in striking antithesis, was true to home. He honored his mother. He loved his wife. Their relations were the tenderest. He loved his children. His son, slain in battle, was never absent from his father's loving thought. His daughter dying, the great heart of the soldier broke. About the man was a noble dignity. He had no little lordliness, no assumed superiority which marks the over-elevation of a little soul. He rose not above his place, but to it. He possessed the dignified demeanor of a man "to the manner born." His comportment was such as brought no discredit to the great nation whose head he was. With him, Whitehall was the court of a Christian king. With his successor, it was a home of royal prostitution. Could contrast be more marked? As a man, simple, humble, not intoxicated by his supreme elevation, but brave, pure, tender—he held to God as his soul's Sovereign. The man Cromwell is of colossal mold, fit companion for Cromwell orator, soldier, statesman.

We judge men by what they achieve. Their works do magnify them. The poet's poem is his exaltation, and the painter becomes a name because his canvas glows with hues and

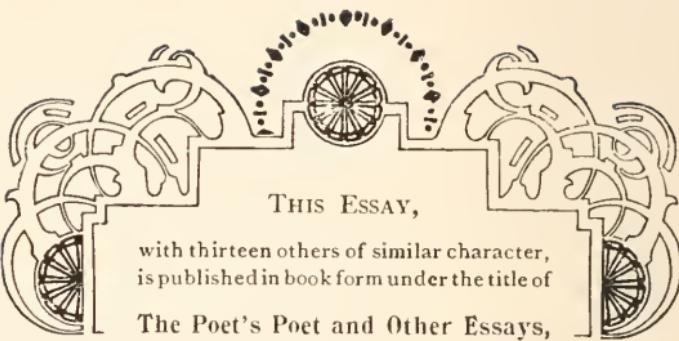
forms of imperishable loveliness. This man should be judged by like standard. He was general and ruler. He was great at home and abroad. He commanded the admiration of contemporaries. He made his government to be respected, feared. He gave England imperishable renown. Assuredly, if this man be judged by what he did achieve, he must be ranked, as says Goldwin Smith, "among the chiefest of the sons of men."

Cromwell, the great Protector, lies dying. A storm, fierce, wild, terrible, rages. The general has come into his last battle. He will gird on sword no more. This is his last charge. It is September 3d, anniversary of victory at Dunbar and Worcester. From those conflicts he came forth unscathed. From this he will be carried to his grave. He prays. England prays. The storm exalts itself like a triumphant troop. Illustrious hour in which a great soul may pass "to where, beyond these voices, there is peace." The battle is ended. The hitherto invulnerable chief is slain. Cromwell lies dead.

In Westminster Abbey there is a place for Mary, who lost Calais, and stained her hands with martyr's blood; but for Oliver Cromwell,

no place. He sounded his guns on every shore. He lost no principality. He shed no martyr's blood. He championed freedom of conscience. He compelled respect for Anglo-Saxondom. He made England illustrious as the dawn. But for him is no place in the mausoleum where English honor sleeps.

In Westminster Abbey there is a place for Charles II, who made the English court a brothel, who sold Dunkirk to England's most inveterate foe for money to squander on harlots—for him a place in Westminster! But for him who protected the lowliest citizen against the world, who made the Pope to do his bidding, who won Dunkirk with his soldier's hand—for Oliver Cromwell, there is no place in Westminster Abbey. Yet let this stand as an illustrious propriety. No cathedral shall hold him. He belongs to all the world. His fame is the common inheritance of the race.



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